



2008 Annual Report

Special to the MTC Newsletter

July 2009

Three bridges built, one giant leap for trail users

There can be little doubt as to the highlight of 2008 for the Montour Trail Council. A look back at the year's six newsletters shows that every lead article featured progress on eliminating the nearly two-mile trail gap between Route 19 in Peters Township and the Chartiers Creek crossing in Cecil Township.

Photos in each newsletter issue followed the project from the early stages of construction through a celebratory ribbon-cutting in October, when this beautiful section began guiding hikers and bikers away from Valleybrook Road (and the killer hill that accompanied this on-road detour), across three bridges, and through a tunnel.

Smaller gaps remain on each side of this highly prized trail section. However, the Council has secured grant money to proceed with replacing the next two bridges heading west, where the trail crosses Georgetown and Morganza Roads.

More trail improvements

Longtime trail fans remember the days when the loose stone surface inside the National Tunnel forced bikers to walk through the tunnel and posed a singularly insurmountable obstacle to baby strollers. Crushed limestone was never more than a temporary solution because of the drainage system installed beneath the trail to collect water dripping from the roof. Happily, those days are gone thanks to the asphalt surface placed on the tunnel floor in July, with help from a Washington County Tourist Promotion Agency grant, the Cecil Friends group, Cecil Township, and our volunteers.

The Council also initiated construction on 0.7 miles of trail in South Park Township, between Triphammer and Piney Fork Roads, completing the east and west abutments of the bridge before the end of the year and the end of two grant extensions. In addition, one mile of trail was resurfaced by our volunteer crew in east Cecil Township during the fall.

A long-wanted mile becomes feasible

A new athletic facility development planned for Moon Township, thanks to a 78-acre land donation from the Sports Legacy Foundation, includes a planned northward extension of the Montour Trail from its present terminus into Coraopolis. We'll have to either create a "mile negative 1" or renumber our mileposts, but that's a small inconvenience in exchange for seeing the trail continue to Route 51 along the Ohio River.

More big events

For many years our annual report has highlighted our success in raising operating funds through three major events on the trail: the Burgh's Run, Montour Trail/IKEA half-marathon, and Tour the Montour bike ride. All three enjoyed another successful year, sustaining consistent participation levels and netting more than \$45,000 for the Montour Trail.

But it's about time that we bestowed "major" status on at least one other annual activity on which we have come to rely. The J.R. Taylor Memorial 5K race, on the Bethel Branch of the trail, earned \$9,000 this year toward construction of the J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge over Clifton Road, which we hope to see go to bid during 2009.

Membership increases & volunteerism remains strong

The last annual report discussed transitions in our membership committee and the challenges that replacing a 19-year veteran volunteer presented. The Membership, Volunteer, and Donor Committee now has this important function of our organization not only under control, but with improvements to where it was. The number of MTC members at the end of 2008 has increased to 1234 from 1059 at the end of 2007, and 2008 membership donations were \$77,910, compared to \$73,503 in 2007.

Last year's annual report indicated the number of volunteer hours "exceeded 8000." We used that vague number due to the inexactness of our volunteer hour reporting. Subsequent to that report, we made some improvements in the ways we solicit and collect volunteer hours from individuals, Friends Groups, Event Chairpersons, and MTC Project Managers. Those improvements resulted in an increase in that the number of reported 2007 volunteer hours to 11,245 (*we told you it exceeded 8000!*). With our reported 2008 volunteer hours increasing 11% to 12,507, we can say with confidence that MTC volunteerism remains strong, representing the equivalent of over six full-time staff. Using a nonprofit consulting organization's estimate of \$20.25 for the average value of a volunteer hour, that is over a quarter million dollars invested in the trail. We can't say it enough, so thank you to all of you who volunteer your time, whether it is one hour or hundreds of hours!

Finances Remain Strong

The table below presents a simplified synopsis of the MTC's finances for 2008. These are not final audited figures, but do show where our money came from and where it was expended. The board continues to maintain a posture of fiscal conservatism, making sure that we are making the most of donors' dollars while living within a prudent budget.

Montour Trail Council 2008 Operations		Montour Trail Council 2008 Trail Construction	
Inflows:		Inflows:	\$1,093,314
MTC Memberships	\$77,910	Outflows:	\$1,073,545
Net Fundraising Events	\$45,704		
Lease Rental	\$18,185		
Miscellaneous	\$8,779	Other:	
Total Inflows	\$150,577	In Kind Labor Donation	\$32,866
Outflows:		Endowment Fund Bal.	\$51,710
Trail Maintenance	\$15,991		
Rent & Utilities	\$11,190		
Insurance	\$8,083		
PUC Payment	\$10,000		
Portajohns	\$9,450		
Postage & Printing	\$3,182		
Professional Fees	\$6,850		
Newsletter	\$7,154		
Equipment Service & Fuel	\$14,492		
All Other	\$5,339		
Total Outflows	\$91,731		

The MTC's 2008 operating outflows look much as they did in 2007, increasing about 4% overall. A notable story in the 7.6% operating inflow increase is the \$18,185 line item "Lease Rental," which was buried in the miscellaneous category last year. Our Real Estate Committee, chaired by Charlie Beaumariage, has made significant strides in collecting some rental payments that have been owed for years and in establishing an on-going program to bill rents due the MTC annually.

The huge increase in Trail Construction inflows and outflows in 2008 can be summed up in four words: West Peters trail construction. Happily, in 2008 the Montour Trail endowment fund was still invested conservatively, so its value fell only slightly, from \$54,108 at the end of 2007 to \$51,710 at the end of 2008. Those of us with 401(k) accounts would probably be quite jealous of seeing only a single-digit percentage decrease in our investments for the future.

Grants

We had a good year for receiving grants, with over \$1 million awarded or pending:

Grants Awarded (8, totaling \$355,150):

- 1 \$90,000 DCNR grant for Phase 20, resurfacing of mile 14-17 and drainage maintenance in trouble spots between mile 9 and mile 17
- 2 \$173,400 DCNR grant for Phase 19, for final design of the Georgetown and Morganza Road bridges
- 3 \$10,000 WCTPA grant for paving National Tunnel
- 4 \$15,000 DCED grant for improving the safety of the crossing at Cliff Mine Road
- 5 \$25,000 DCED grant for Piney Fork (Phase 8E)
- 6 \$3500 Trail Volunteer Fund Grant for the temporary Route 50 crossing
- 7 \$3250 Trail Volunteer Fund Grant for trail resurfacing in East Cecil Township
- 8 \$50,000 Laurel Foundation grant for Phase 8E

Pending Grants (3, totaling \$815,000):

- 9 \$221,500 for Phase 8E2/6 submitted to DCNR
- 10 \$174,000 for the Airport Connector submitted to PennDOT's "Smart Transportation" initiative
- 11 \$419,500 for Phase 19 Construction, Morganza and Georgetown Road Bridges. Submitted to the Washington County Local Share Account

2008 Contributors to Endowment Fund

\$1000 to \$5000

Anonymous
Edmund Taylor

\$1000 and Up

Valleyview
Charitable
Foundation
Judy & Tom
Thompson
Roy Weil & Mary
Shaw

\$500 to \$999

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Henry Pecher
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Dr. & Mrs. A. Van Strien
Ralph Veltre
Nancy Verbos
Melvin N. Vesely
Dirk Visser
Frank P. Vitale
Howard Voigt
Mark J. & Lorraine M. Vorko
Thomas & Peggy Wagner
Karon Wagner
Karl Waldner
G. Deborah Walko
Mr & Mrs Tom Walsh & Family
Doug & Susanna Wayt
Rick Weaver
Rick Wehan
Martin Weirick
Gerard & Nancy Weiss
Donald Weissenstein
Cyndee Welsh
John Patrick Welsh
Cathie Wenk
Michael T. Wherry
James J. White
Jill Wiggins
Leon & Bee Williams
Tom Williams
Jeff Williams
Patrick Wilson
Robert J. Winters
Jim Wise
Flo Wittig
Richard Wolfe
Duane Wolley
Charles Woods
Rosemarie Wooten
Jeff Worden & Family
Sue & Dave, Tony, Kika, & Dayzee
Wright
Charles T. Wright
Jim & Donna Yanosik
Dale Yessler
Stanley Zaslau
Eric & Roxanne Zeisloft
Dennis & Carol Ziolkowski
Anna Marie Zupancic

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Fired Up
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Hefren -Tilston, Inc.
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Highmark
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IKEA
Jabby Joe's Restaurant
Jay Hillen Vending
Jim Hanna Insurance
John Hooton Assoc.
Dana Johnston
JRG Advisors
Keystone Canine
Keystone Window & Door
Kireacos Barber Shop
KOB Solutions
Kumpi Dog Food
Lamar
Lanigan Massage Therapy
Lighthouse Electric
Luv You Pet Salon
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Mancini's Bakery
Carmine A. Mastandrea, DDS
McMurray Dairy Bar
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Swindell Dressler
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The Eye Gallery
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